

Remarks/Arguments:

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the present amendments and following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 9-15 are pending in the application, with Claim 9 amended by the current amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 9, 10, 14 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maeda (U.S. Patent No. 6,204,898 B1) in view of Kita et al. (JP 11007000 A, hereinafter Kita); and Claims 11-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maeda and Kita in view of Takamori et al. (JP 06-265922, hereinafter Takamori).

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the personal interview between the Examiner, the Examiner's supervisor, and Applicants' representative on June 8, 2004. During the interview, the Examiners agreed that neither Maeda nor Kita disclose a frame member including a lip configured to hold a light source means and an optical guide plate.

The specification is amended to disclose "[f]rame member 151 has base frame areas 152, 153, and engagement lip 154 for holding the light tube 130 and LEDs 131, 131." Claim 9 is similarly amended. Support for this amendment is found in Applicants' originally filed Figure 3. No new matter is added.

Briefly recapitulating, Claim 9 is directed to a liquid crystal display, including a) a liquid crystal panel; b) a liquid crystal panel holding member configured to hold the liquid crystal panel therein; and c) a light unit. The light unit includes light source means and an optical guide plate configured to direct light beams emitted from the light source means to said liquid crystal panel. The light unit has a frame member having a lip configured to hold said light source means and the optical guide plate. Between the liquid crystal panel holding member and the frame member, engaging means engaged with each other are provided,

respectively. The optical guide plate is arranged on a display surface side of the liquid crystal panel so that light beams emitted from said light source means are directed to said liquid crystal panel. The claimed invention provides improved optical and manufacturing characteristics.¹

Maeda discloses a front light type crystal display device including a liquid crystal structure 6 and an illuminator 7 including LEDs 2 and a light guiding member 3.² The liquid crystal display of Maeda can be used as a display for a portable telephone that includes a top case 26 and a bottom case 25.³ However, contrary to the Official Action,⁴ Maeda does not disclose or suggest a light unit frame member that encases a light source means and an optical guide plate as recited in Applicants' Claim 9. The top and bottom cases of Maeda enclose the entire front light type crystal display whereas Applicants' recited light unit frame member only encases a light source means and an optical guide plate. However, in the interest of expediting progress towards an allowance, Claim 9 is amended to recite that the frame member includes a lip configured to hold the light source means and optical guide plate. Applicants' recited light unit frame member includes base frame areas 152, 153, and engagement lip 154 for holding the light tube 130 and LEDs 131, 131.⁵ The encased light source means and optical guide plate are then snapped into place into the recited liquid crystal panel holding member by the recited engaging means.⁶

Kita discloses a case having upper 100 and lower 130 portions, where the case is configured to hold a liquid crystal panel 120.⁷ However, like Maeda, Kita fails to disclose or suggest Applicants' recited light unit frame member (with or without a lip). Applicants have

¹ Specification, page 8, lines 26-32.

² Maeda, Figure 1.

³ Maeda, Figure 11.

⁴ Official Action, page 3, lines 1-5.

⁵ Specification, page 7, line 31 – page 8, line 9; Figure 3.

⁶ Specification, Figure 3.

⁷ Kita, translated abstract; Figure 1.

also considered the Takamori reference and submit this reference does not cure the deficiencies of Maeda and Kita.

As none of the cited prior art, individually or in combination, disclose or suggest all the elements of independent Claim 9, Applicants submit the inventions defined by Claim 9, and all claims depending therefrom, are not rendered obvious by the asserted prior art for at least the reasons stated above.⁸

The present amendment is submitted in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 which permits amendments placing the claims in better form for consideration on appeal after final rejection. Since the present amendment clarifies the claimed invention, it is respectfully requested that 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 be liberally construed and the present amendment be entered.

Consequently, in view of the foregoing discussion and present amendments, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413-2220
GJM/MEM/kkn



Gregory J. Maier
Registration No. 25,599
Attorneys of Record
Michael E. Monaco
Registration No. 52,041

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⁸ MPEP § 2142 "...the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, and not based on applicant's disclosure. In re Vaack, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991)."